

Stay Healthy Streets—Frequently Asked Questions

June 2021

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1. What are Stay Healthy Streets?

Stay Healthy Streets are open for people walking, rolling, biking, and playing and closed to pass through traffic. The goal is to open up more space for people rather than cars as a way to improve community and individual health.

Stay Healthy Streets can include:

- Traffic safety features like easier crossings at busy streets, speed humps to slow down drivers, and sign and pavement markings to help people find their way
- Neighborhood activities like hopscotch and basketball (that you would otherwise need to get a street closure permit for)
- Intersections with traffic circles and street murals to discourage people from driving on Stay Healthy Streets unless they have to

What does this mean for drivers?

- People driving who need to get to homes and destinations along Stay Healthy Streets are still able to drive on these streets (including deliveries and emergency vehicles). Drivers should use extra caution and yield to people.
- People enjoying the street should be mindful of drivers trying to get to homes and destinations as well

This is a challenging and unprecedented time for everyone. Some people have expressed joy at having the street available for walking, running, and biking and others have shared how inconvenient it has been. We appreciate the extra time people are giving themselves to travel safely, to respect the closure and residents impacted by changing travel patterns, as well as

using face masks when staying 6-feet apart is not possible. We're in this together and learning as we go. Your health and well-being are important. Thank you for working with us.

2. How did these start?

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, in spring and summer of 2020 we upgraded over 25 miles of [Neighborhood Greenways](#) to Stay Healthy Streets by closing them to pass through traffic and opening them to people walking, rolling, and biking.

Neighborhood Greenways are neighborhood streets identified through past public engagement with enhanced safety features like speed humps, stop signs, and crossing improvements at major streets. Like any residential street, pass through traffic is discouraged, but local access, deliveries, waste pickup, and emergency vehicles are allowed.

We selected streets by working from the 45-mile Neighborhood Greenway network and avoiding impacts to businesses, fire response routes, transit operations and layover, and COVID-19 response efforts like healthcare provider parking.

Neighborhood selection considered the Race and Social Equity Index, where existing neighborhood greenways served areas of dense housing or limited public open space, geographic coverage so that people could have opportunities to get outdoors without leaving their neighborhoods, and access to essential services and open businesses.

3. Will Stay Healthy Streets and Keep Moving Streets continue after the pandemic?

We're thinking long term. We're planning to make 20 miles of Stay Healthy Streets permanent and we want to hear from you on where they should be and what they should look like.

They can be used for gardening, games and sports, potlucks, and other celebrations. Because the street is already closed to pass through traffic, you don't need permits to close the street for these activities, you just need to notify neighbors on your block and be able to move if someone needs to get to their home or get a delivery.

Tell us what you think about making them permanent. Take our online survey, available in 10 languages:

1. English <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/8F9GMKV>
2. Spanish <https://es.surveymonkey.com/r/Y95PG7S>
3. Tigrinya <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/YDNMKPW>
4. Amharic <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/5YQF66S>
5. Vietnamese <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/YQ2MM3D>
6. Somali <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/YJHNCDO>
7. Korean <https://ko.surveymonkey.com/r/YQTXJGR>
8. Chinese Simplified <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BT6GF53>
9. Chinese Traditional <https://zh.surveymonkey.com/r/YQP32G6>
10. Tagalog <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/YJYHTXR>

Or leave a message, request a listening session, or take our survey by calling: (206) 727-3565 and press:

- 1 for Spanish
- 2 for Cantonese
- 3 for Mandarin
- 4 for Vietnamese
- 5 for Somali
- 6 for Amharic
- 7 for Tigrinya
- 8 for Korean
- 9 for Tagalog

4. I want/don't want the Stay Healthy Street to be made permanent or I have a suggestion for an improvement.

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- 3. Tigrinya <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/YDNMKPW>
- 4. Amharic <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/5YQF66S>
- 5. Vietnamese <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/YQ2MM3D>
- 6. Somali <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/YJHNCDO>
- 7. Korean <https://ko.surveymonkey.com/r/YQTXJGR>
- 8. Chinese Simplified <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BT6GF53>
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5. What are Keep Moving Streets?

During the summer and fall of 2020, we partnered with Seattle Parks and Recreation to create more space for people to exercise and keep 6 feet apart. While parking lots were closed, and people were discouraged from congregating, we opened streets adjacent to 4 destination parks to create more space for people to get outside.

We're now working to build on success and lessons learned from last year's Keep Moving Streets.

See below on the plans for continuing Keep Moving Streets (streets adjacent to major parks that are closed to vehicles and open to walking and biking) this summer to help people travel and play in a healthy way.

GREEN LAKE

W Green Lake Way N is currently closed to vehicles and open to people walking and biking. (Drivers can still enter and exit the Lower Woodland tennis court and off-leash parking lots from E Green Lake Way.)

We have not yet made a decision about the long-term configuration for this street and are evaluating options to balance the needs of people who want to walk, roll, bike, and drive in this area.

LAKE WASHINGTON BLVD

Starting 4th of July weekend, 3 miles of Lake Washington Blvd (from Mt Baker Park to Seward Park) will open to people walking, rolling, and biking on weekends* and holidays through at least September.

*For consistency, barricades will be placed each Friday afternoon and removed Monday morning. This also reduces costs in paying staff overtime. On 4th of July and Labor Day weekends, barricades will be removed the following Tuesday morning.

Parking lots are open and will be accessible from the nearest cross street ([see map](#)). Those driving to homes along the boulevard because they live there, are visiting, or making deliveries are allowed.

ALKI POINT

We're working to secure funding for designing and building permanent changes on the street based on community input. In the meantime, **Alki Point will remain a Keep Moving Street in its current form until spring 2022 or until we secure funding for permanent changes on the street.**

In the coming weeks, we'll do more outreach to hear from more voices, learn what the community thinks of this Keep Moving Street as it is today, and understand what people want the street to look like in the future. [Go to our webpage](#) to get involved.

GOLDEN GARDENS

There are currently no plans to close either the parking lots at Golden Gardens or Golden Gardens Drive. Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR) would only consider closing parking lot(s) as a last resort and SPR's decision would inform whether SDOT decides to close Golden Gardens Drive.

Both SPR and SDOT are actively considering alternative steps to avoid parking lot and road closures at this location including taking measures to reduce illegal parking and improving pedestrian safety. This may include new signs along the street and in parking lots or additional staffing on site.

6. Why is the street just south of Green Lake closed?



Photo credit: Dongho Chang

Last spring, we partnered with Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR) to create more space for people to safely exercise and use this destination park. Some parking lots were closed to manage crowding, biking was restricted on the trail inside Green Lake Park, and mask mandates and direction for people to keep six-feet apart were put in place. By opening W Green Lake Way S to people walking, rolling, and biking, space was provided for social distancing while recreating, and an all ages and abilities location was created for people biking who might not feel as comfortable using a regular bike lane.

As we try to support people in staying healthy, more people visit the park as temperatures warm up, and we work with evolving safety protocols, the extra space between Woodland and Green Lake parks for people to walk, bike, and roll is being maintained. Modifications to create ADA access to the off-leash dog park have been made, and we are nearing the end of the [Green Lake/Wallingford Paving and Safety project](#), which will hopefully provide some driving relief.

Our team does understand having this street closed is an inconvenience for those who drive east/west between the Green Lake and Phinney Ridge neighborhoods. There are limited options for crossing the state highway and people driving have also been impacted by the paving project and associated detours. We're grateful to everyone who lives in the area and has adjusted their schedules and travel patterns while we move through these unprecedented times.

Seattle Parks & Recreation staff continue to monitor Public Health guidance. And we appreciate residents' understanding as we work to be nimble and balance keeping people healthy with the extra time some people driving are experiencing.

7. What's the status of Lake Washington Blvd for summer 2021?



Photo credit: SDOT Flickr

Starting 4th of July weekend, 3 miles of Lake Washington Blvd (from Mt Baker Park to Seward Park) will open to people walking, rolling, and biking on weekends* and holidays through at least September.

*For consistency, barricades will be placed each Friday afternoon and removed Monday morning. This also reduces costs in paying staff overtime. On 4th of July and Labor Day weekends, barricades will be removed the following Tuesday morning.

Parking lots are open and will be accessible from the nearest cross street ([see map](#)). Those driving to homes along the boulevard because they live there, are visiting, or making deliveries are allowed.

Important details

PARKING: Seattle Parks and Recreation parking lots are now open which should be a big load off the increased parking, driving, and noise on side streets. Based on neighbor input, we're looking into options such as trash pick up.

While all parking lots are open, to minimize driving on Lake Washington Blvd, we're limiting access to which lot entrances are open. See the map below and follow signs showing where to enter each parking lot.

DATA COLLECTION: We'll continue collecting data related to possible traffic diversion at S Genesee St (east of 38th Ave S), S McClellan St (east of 31st Ave S), and Wilson Ave S (northwest of S Lucille St). We'll also add a counter to collect data for Hunter Blvd S.

START DATE: This weekend, we'll close the [1-mile stretch](#) between Mt Baker and Genesee parks. We'll start the 3-mile closure between Mt Baker and Seward Park on 4th of July weekend.

DURATION: Current plans are to have the program run through September. It may extend into October depending on how well it's used.

STAN SAYRES: Please take extra caution at the entrance of Stan Sayres Memorial Park where there's a higher volume of people driving in and out of the parking lot entrance with boats. See our map below for details on where to enter when driving.

8. Why didn't you include a "no closure" in the Lake Washington Blvd survey?

We're hearing both that this program creates a much-needed space in Southeast Seattle that invites people to walk and bike and enjoy the lake without fear of cars and that the changes increase activity outside people's homes, can make people feel pushed away from accessing parks along Lake Washington Blvd, and removes the serenity for people driving along the lake or unable to walk or bike long distances.

Listening to feedback, we're working closely with Seattle Parks and Recreation to maintain access to destination parks as much as possible. We're also collecting data about traffic diversion to learn where we need to make modifications.

As we gather input for what Lake Washington Blvd should look like this summer, a **"weekends only option" is included in the survey which most closely reflects the pre-pandemic status quo of the street.** Closing the street from Mt Baker Park to Seward Park (except for local access) on weekends is the same model as [Bicycle Sundays](#) which have been an institution on Lake Washington Blvd for decades. The "weekends" option is an extended version of Bicycle Sundays because it would be both Saturday and Sunday. We opted not to call it Bicycle Weekends as we didn't want to introduce another program name into the process at this time to reduce confusion.

The data and summaries are linked on our [webpage](#):

- [Lake Washington Pilot Summary](#)
- [Lake Washington Pilot Public Comments](#)
- [Lake Washington Blvd Public Comments from Aug 30 - Sept 4](#)
- [Traffic diversion data analysis](#)

9. What's the status of Alki Point for summer 2021?



Photo credit: SDOT Flickr

In spring 2020, we opened a [Keep Moving Street on Beach Drive SW](#) and temporarily closed the street to pass thru-traffic. Local access is still allowed for people driving to a residence or destination within the closure.

Since the Alki Point Keep Moving Street opened, we've heard from many people that they would like to see it stay in some form to keep providing space for people to walk, bike, roll, and play. Our counts also show the Alki Keep Moving Street has the highest observed usage per mile among any Keep Moving Street or Stay Healthy Street.

In the coming weeks, we'll do more outreach to hear from more voices, learn what the community thinks of this Keep Moving Street as it is today, and understand what people want the street to look like in the future.

We're also working to secure funding for designing and building permanent changes on the street based on community input. In the meantime, **Alki Point will remain a Keep Moving Street in its current form until spring 2022 or until we secure funding for permanent changes on the street.**

Visit the [project webpage](#) to learn more and join our [project email list](#) to stay informed of upcoming community engagement.

10. What do I do when a sign is down or damaged?

If the sign can't be easily set back in place, you have a few options for reporting it based on what's most convenient for you:

1. Use the City's [Find it Fix it](#) smart phone app
2. Submit an online [Service Request](#)
3. Email 684-ROAD@seattle.gov
4. Call 206-684-7623

Please be sure to include the specific location and we'll get SDOT crews out there to move or repair the sign.

11. How do I request a Stay Healthy Street on my block?

As of April 1, neighbors can again apply for Play Street permits. Play Streets are the most immediate way to close a block to people driving and open it for play. You can find more info on the Play Streets webpage: <http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/permits-and-services/permits/play-streets> or contact the Play Streets team at publicspace@seattle.gov.

12. Please fund and implement a protected path on Aurora Ave along Green Lake Park.

We're working closely with our partners to create a larger Stay Healthy Street near Green Lake Park. The Washington State Department of Transportation has been supportive of our efforts along State Route 99/Aurora Ave. We will continue to look for ways to make this idea a reality. Our considerations include COVID-19 recovery and vaccination rates, Aurora Ave traffic calming solutions, funding availability, and coordination with Seattle Parks and Recreation.

13. People are driving on the closed street, what do I do?

People driving who need to get to homes and businesses along Stay Healthy Streets are still able to drive on these streets (including deliveries and emergency vehicles). Drivers should use extra caution and yield to people. People enjoying the street should be mindful of drivers trying to get to homes and destinations as well.

If this appears to be a persistent problem, email us (stayhealthystreets@seattle.gov) to let us know.

Something to be mindful of is we've heard concerns from BIPOC neighbors feeling unwelcome on their own street when they're driving to their homes. If we truly want to rebuild to better than before, then "we" must include everybody. For many white people, it means understanding cultures that existed in the neighborhood you live in now before you arrived. It means valuing everyone's voices and finding ways to include them. It means everyone feels safe traveling on our sidewalks and streets. It means recognizing racism and becoming an ally. Use these links to learn more:

- [Confronting Power and Privilege](#) (Transportation Planning)
- [Impact 2020: The Central District Community Conversation](#)
- [Running While Black: Our \[New York Times\] Readers Respond](#) (Seattle mention)
- [Bystander Intervention Virtual Trainings](#) (1-hour training)
- [White Supremacy Culture](#) (dRworks)

14. Do I need a permit for activities on a Stay Healthy Street?

Because Stay Healthy Streets are already closed to pass through traffic, you don't need a permit from the City of Seattle to play in the street. The barricades and signs already in place discourage pass through-traffic, and remind people driving to their homes or making deliveries to drive slowly. [Get more info in our Play on your Stay Healthy Street flyer.](#)